

generating from the raw image, including employing a first quantizing step, a first compressed image data set suitable for reproducing the image at a first quality level; and

generating from the raw image, including employing a second quantizing step independent of the first quantizing step, a second compressed image data set which when combined with the first compressed image data set reproduces the image at a second, higher quality level.

Sub B1  
11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of generating a first compressed image data set comprises JPEG compression.

AI Cont  
12. The method of claim 10, further comprising:  
storing the first compressed image data set in an image storage device; and  
storing the second compressed image data set in the image storage device if space is available.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the steps of generating the first and second compressed image data sets are performed by first and second quantizers.

Sub B2  
14. The method of claim 10, wherein the image storage device includes primary and secondary storage areas, the method further comprising:  
releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device if insufficient space is available in the primary storage area of the image storage device to store the first compressed image data set.

15. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device releases space in a first in first out order.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device releases space in a last in first out order.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein each compressed image data set stored in the secondary storage area has associated with it an image quality metric and the step of releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device releases space in lowest image quality first order.

*BP*  
*and*

18. A system of processing images in a digital camera comprising:

- means for inputting a raw image;
- means for generating from the raw image, including employing a first quantizing step, a first compressed image data set suitable for reproducing the image at a first quality level; and
- means for generating from the raw image, including employing a second quantizing step independent of the first quantizing step, a second compressed image data set which when combined with the first compressed image data set reproduces the image at a second, higher quality level.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the means for generating a first compressed image data set comprises JPEG compression means.

20. The system of claim 18, further comprising:

means for storing the first compressed image data set in an image storage device; and

means for storing the second compressed image data set in the image storage device if space is available.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the first compressed image data set and the means for generating the second compressed image data set comprise first and second quantizers.

Sub B3  
22. The system of claim 18, wherein the image storage device includes primary and secondary storage areas, the system further comprising:

AI cont  
means for releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device if insufficient space is available in the primary storage area of the image storage device to store the first compressed image data set.

23. The system of claim 22, wherein the means for releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device releases space in a first in first out order.

24. The system of claim 22, wherein the means for releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device releases space in a last in first out order.

Sub B4  
25. The system of claim 22, wherein each compressed image data set in the secondary storage area has associated with it an image quality metric and the means

for releasing space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device releases space in lowest image quality first order.

26. A system for processing images in a digital camera comprising:  
an image storage device; and  
a processing unit configured to transfer raw image data from an input device, generate a first compressed image data set from the raw image, including employing a first quantizing step, and generate a second compressed image data set, including employing a second quantizing step independent of the first quantizing step, store the first compressed image data set in the image storage device, and store the second compressed image data set in the image storage device if space is available.

By  
cont

AI  
cont

27. The system of claim 26 wherein the processor unit is configured to perform JPEG compression to generate the first compressed image data set and the second compressed image data set.

28. The system of claim 26, wherein the processing unit comprises a first quantizer configured to generate the first compressed image data set and a second quantizer configured to generate the second compressed image data set.

29. The system of claim 26, wherein the image storage device comprises primary and secondary storage areas, and the processing unit is further configured to release space in the secondary storage areas of the image storage device if insufficient space is available in the primary storage area of the image storage device to store the first compressed image data set.

30. The system of claim 29, wherein the processing unit is configured to release space in secondary storage area of the image storage device in a first in first out order.

31. The system of claim 29, wherein the processing unit is configured to release space in secondary storage area of the image storage device in a last in first out order.

32. The system of claim 29, wherein each compressed image data set in the secondary storage area has associated with it an image quality metric and the processing unit is configured to release space in the secondary storage area of the image storage device in lowest image quality first order.